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Fourth Report

**COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF
THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS**

(This report covers the week from
9 March through 15 March 1973)

*This memorandum has been prepared jointly by the
Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense*

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16 March 1973
SC No. 06172/73

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16 March 1973

Fourth Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF
THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS*

(This report covers the week from
9 March through 15 March 1973)

The Key Points

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- The number of combat incidents initiated by the Communists in violation of the ceasefire terms increased slightly in South Vietnam, but diminished further in Laos.

* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

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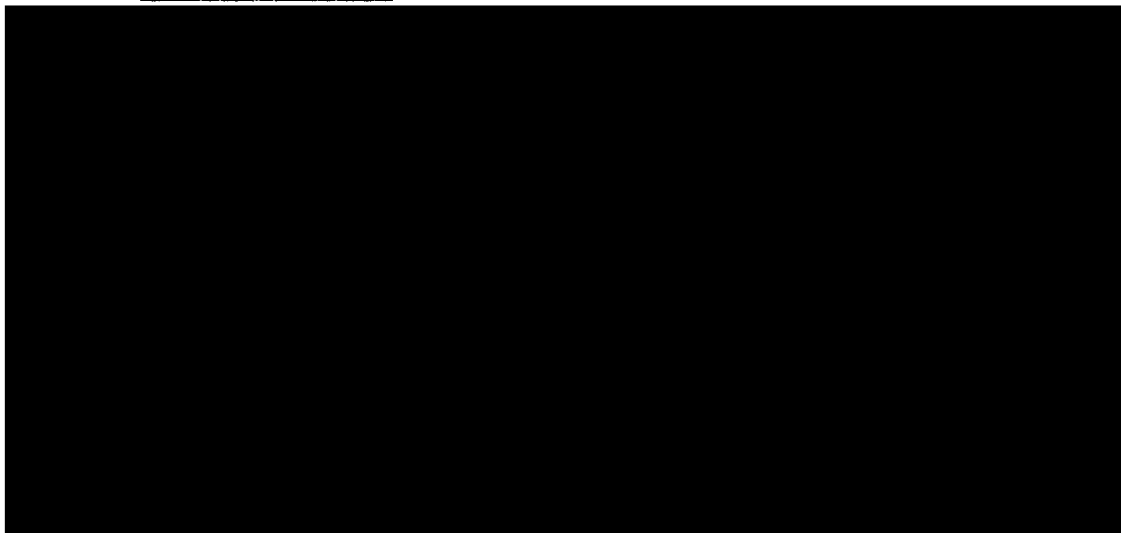
The Details

NOTE: This is the fourth in a series of reports detailing recently received evidence of (a) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military materiel toward and into South Vietnam, and (b) Communist-instigated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements. As with previous issues, we have prepared this memorandum in sterilized form in order to minimize the risk of source exposure if parts of the memorandum are used outside U.S. government channels. We have appended a listing of specific sources, which is meant for U.S. eyes only, at ANNEX I.

A. Infiltration and Redeployment of North Vietnamese Personnel

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2. No redeployments of major Communist units into or out of South Vietnam have been detected during the past week. NVA/VC units still appear to be in a defensive posture, engaged primarily in refitting and training.

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B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies by
The North Vietnamese Toward and Into South Viet-
nam and Laos

3. Evidence received during the past week indicates that there is still considerable activity going on in most areas of the North Vietnamese military supply network, but that vehicle traffic through the entry corridors from North Vietnam into the Laos Panhandle was below the level of the previous week. The number of trucks moving southward through Ban Karai Pass, the major entry point during the current dry season, was less than half that observed the previous week, though activity at Mu Gia Pass was fairly constant and traffic in the western DMZ increased sharply. The overall (i.e., net) decline from last week in traffic moving into the Laos Panhandle through these three corridors was on the order of 30 percent. In addi-

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southern Laos, and it appears that nearly all the heavy equipment which we had observed earlier has now passed through the transport system. Nevertheless, a substantial amount of North Vietnamese truck traffic continued to move during the week through southern Laos toward South Vietnam and Cambodia.

4. Reliable evidence received in Washington on 16 March indicates that North Vietnamese logistics units in southern Laos are preparing for a major new transportation effort, which is to run from 15 March through 31 May of this year. (Under normal weather conditions, 31 May would be in the early stages of the rainy season.) North Vietnamese units in this area are [REDACTED]

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(See ANNEX

III for more details.)

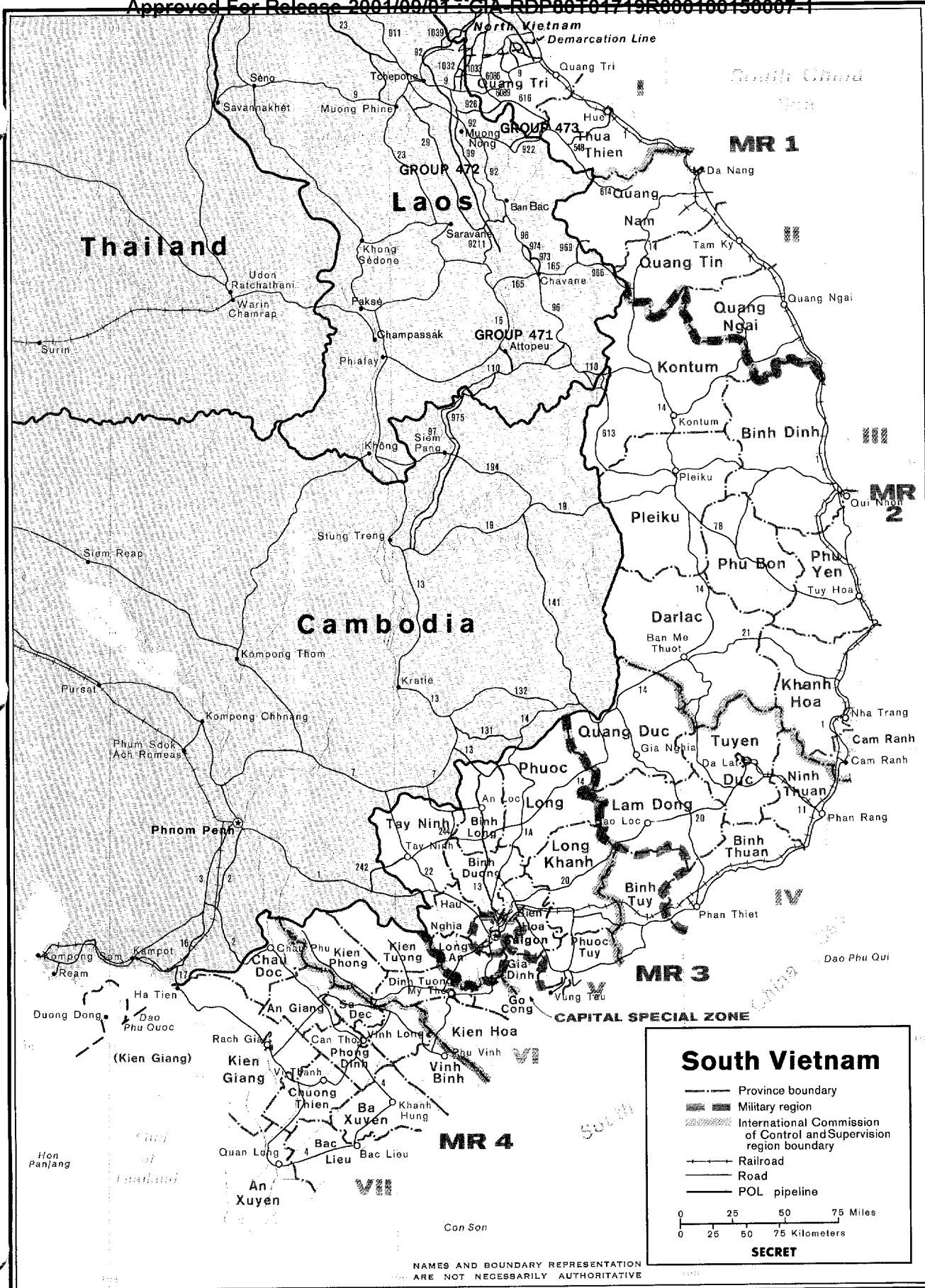
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5. The following instances of Communist logistic activity were observed within South Vietnam and in the DMZ during the period under review. Traffic observed within South Vietnam probably reflects supplies which have recently entered the country. (The map on the following page shows the roads and route numbers which appear below.)

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South Vietnam

- Province boundary
- Military region
- International Commission of Control and Supervision region boundary
- Railroad
- Road
- POL pipeline

0 25 50 75 Miles
0 25 50 75 Kilometers

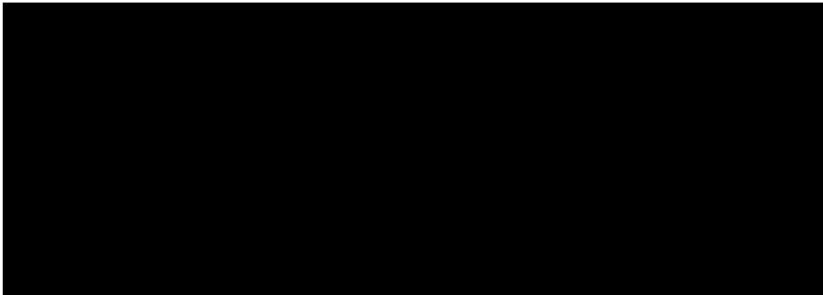
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NAMES AND BOUNDARY REPRESENTATION
ARE NOT NECESSARILY AUTHORITY

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- (b) Recent road improvement work was observed on 27 February on Route 6089 between Khe Sanh and its junction with Route 616 and on Route 616 south of the Route 6089/616 junction. On the same date, a new dual lane highway bridge was also observed to have been constructed on Route 9, 4 miles east of Khe Sanh.
- (c) In the A Shau Valley region of South Vietnam, the Communists have extended or upgraded Route 614 southward for a distance of four miles, according to a reliable observation made on 27 February, but only recently available in Washington. If this route is extended by another 10 miles or so, it would connect with Route 14. The completion of Route 614 coupled with the repair of Route 14, which is overgrown in several sections, would provide Communist forces with a through supply route within South Vietnam running from the DMZ to the central highlands.
- (d) On 27 February, a 21. vehicle convoy was observed moving southward on Route 244, according to recently received information. Route 244 is located in northeastern Tay Ninh Province, GVN MR-3, within 10 miles of the Cambodian border.
- (e) On 6 March, nine North Vietnamese trucks were observed towing anti-aircraft guns and two 130-mm. field guns

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southward on Route 13 toward Loc Ninh in northern Binh Long Province some 6-8 miles below the Cambodian border.

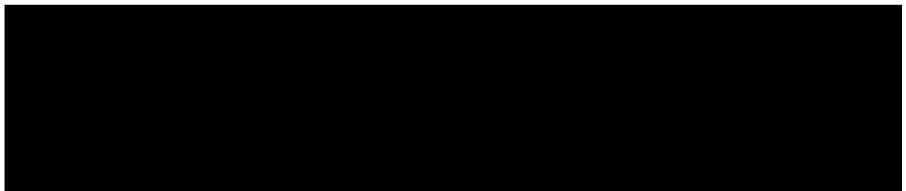
- (f) On 11 March, a convoy of 47 trucks was observed moving east and south of Khe Sanh.
- (g) There were 106 southbound trucks observed on Route 1033 in the DMZ during the period 8 through 14 March.
- (h) 11 trucks were observed moving east on Route 9 in western Quang Tri Province during the period 8 through 14 March.

6. There were continuing indications during the reporting period of North Vietnamese logistic activity in the Laos Panhandle and northeastern Cambodia. Historical precedent would suggest that much of this activity probably involves supplies destined for South Vietnam.

- (a) On 8 March, a convoy of 50 to 60 North Vietnamese cargo trucks was observed moving supplies south along Route 16 through Attapeu and into Cambodia. The convoy was carrying both foodstuffs and munitions.
- (b) From 23 February to 9 March, over 1,000 trucks were observed moving south through the Ban Karai Pass.

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(c)



7. There is additional evidence of the continuing movement within North Vietnam of military and other supplies which are probably moving to northern and southern Laos and South Vietnam.

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(a)

- (b) Another NVA logistic unit operating in the Vinh area was observed on 9 March sending as many as 85 vehicles to pick up cargo at a railroad depot for movement to north Laos.

C. Combat Activity Instigated by Communist Forces In South Vietnam Since the Ceasefire

8. In South Vietnam, the total numbers of Communist initiated ceasefire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 28 January and for the last week (9 March - 15 March) are shown below:

Military Region	Total Since Ceasefire Level of Action		Last Week (9-15 Mar) Level of Action	
	Major <u>1/</u>	Minor <u>1/</u>	Major	Minor
MR 1	561	2,062	91	222
MR 2	131	761	13	67
MR 3	134	1,167	21	165
MR 4	235	2,349	34	295
Totals	1,061	6,339	159 (131) <u>2/</u>	749 (691) <u>2/</u>

1/ DOD definitions of major and minor violations are contained in ANNEX IV.

2/ Denotes totals of previous week.

9. Some of these violations may have been initiated by GVN forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The table above and the chart on

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the following page, however, do show fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the ceasefire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is accurately reported by the South Vietnamese in most instances, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated in objective fashion.

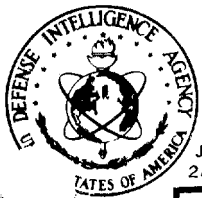
10. During the past week, the number of major ceasefire violations increased from 131 to 159. Al-most all of the increase was noted in MR 1 where the total increased from 72 to 91. Most of the major violations consisted of attacks-by-fire. The number of minor violations increased from 691 to 749. The most significant increase during the week occurred in MR 3 which reported 165 violations as opposed to 99 during the previous week.

11. The following is a chronological listing of only the most significant "major" Communist violations of the ceasefire in South Vietnam that were reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces during the past week.

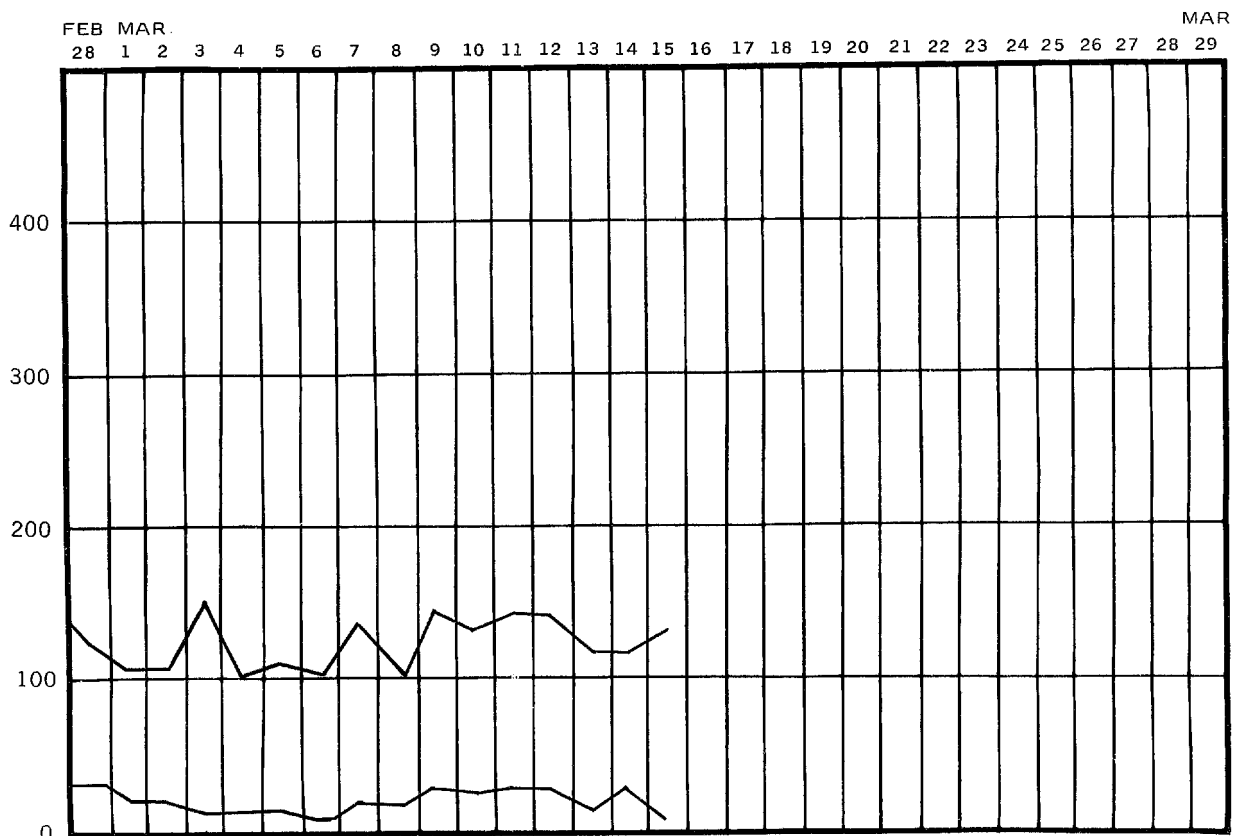
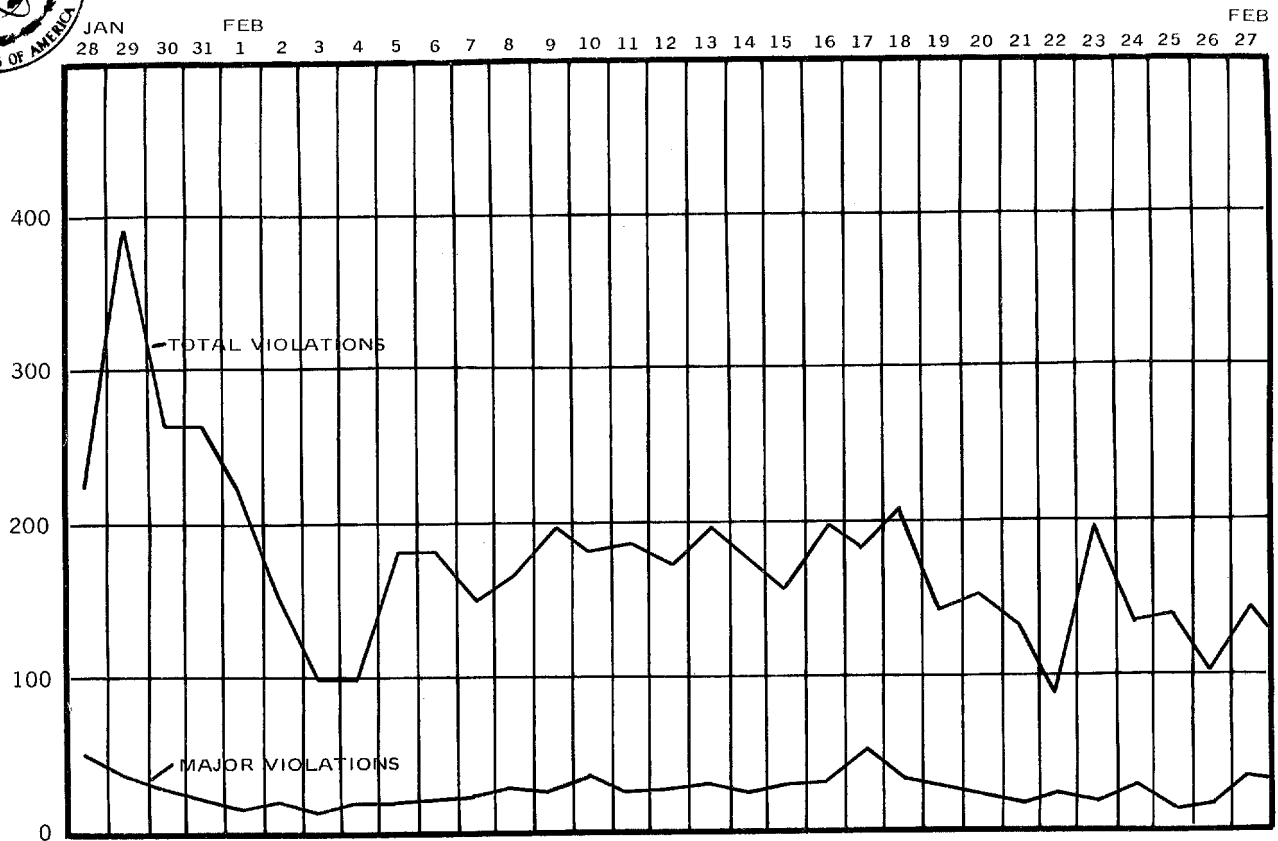
MILITARY REGION ONE

- (a) On 6 March, 18 miles west-southwest of Quang Ngai, enemy elements attacked an ARVN ranger battalion.
- (b) On 8 March, 14 miles west of Hue, enemy forces fired 180 mixed 60-mm/82-mm, and 120-mm mortar and 122-mm artillery rounds at elements of an ARVN infantry battalion and followed with a ground attack.
- (c) On 8 and 9 March, in the Airborne Division area of operation southwest of Quang Tri City, enemy forces fired a total of 562 mixed 82-mm. mortar and 130-mm. artillery rounds during 10 separate attacks by fire.

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CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AS REPORTED BY RVNAF
(28 JANUARY 1973 TO THE PRESENT)



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- (d) On 9 and 10 March, 6 miles southwest of Quang Tri City, enemy forces fired a total of 270 mixed 82-mm mortar, 130-mm artillery, and 107-mm recoilless rifle rounds at elements of an airborne battalion during three separate attacks.
- (e) On 10 and 11 March, southwest of Quang Tri City, enemy elements fired over 600 mixed mortar, recoilless rifle, and artillery rounds in the Airborne Division area of operation during 11 separate attacks-by-fire.
- (f) On 10 and 11 March, 18 miles west-northwest of Tam Ky, enemy forces fired a total of 170 mixed rounds of 82-mm mortar and 57-mm recoilless rifle fire at elements of an infantry battalion during three separate attacks.
- (g) On 11 and 12 March, in the Airborne Division area of operation southwest of Quang Tri City, enemy elements fired over 200 mixed 82-mm mortar and 122-mm artillery rounds in five separate attacks.
- (h) On 12 and 13 March, southwest of Quang Tri City, elements of three ARVN airborne battalions received nine separate attacks-by-fire (ABFs) totaling 584 mixed 82-mm mortar and 122-mm/130-mm artillery rounds.
- (i) On 12 March, nine miles west of Hue, enemy forces attacked an element of an ARVN infantry battalion with 85 rounds of mixed 60-mm/82-mm mortar fire followed by a ground assault.

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- (j) On 13 March, 18 miles southwest of Hue, an element of an ARVN infantry battalion received an enemy ABF of 145 rounds of mixed 82-mm mortar, B-40 rocket, and 75-mm recoilless rifle fire.
- (k) From 13 through 15 March, southwest of Quang Tri City, three Airborne battalions received attacks-by-fire totalling 1,176 rounds of mortar and rocket fire.

MILITARY REGION TWO

- (a) On 9 March, 12 miles north-northeast of Bong Son, enemy elements shot down a VNAF UH-1H helicopter.
- (b) On 10 March, 4 miles north of Phan Thiet, enemy forces attacked a Regional Force (RF) company.
- (c) On 10 March, 1 mile south of Bong Son, enemy forces attacked elements of an ARVN infantry battalion and a reconnaissance company.
- (d) On 12 March, 15 miles southwest of Pleiku, enemy forces attacked elements of an ARVN ranger border defense battalion and a tank squadron with an ABF of 20 mixed 82-mm mortar and AT-3 missile rounds.

MILITARY REGION THREE

- (a) On 9 March, 14 miles southeast of Dau Tieng, enemy forces fired 90 mixed rounds of 80- and 120-mm mortar, 150-mm artillery, and 75-mm recoilless rifle fire at elements of an ARVN infantry battalion.

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- (b) On 9 March, 6 miles southwest of Lai Khe, an enemy force attacked elements of an ARVN infantry battalion.

MILITARY REGION FOUR

- (a) On 14 March, 18 miles southeast of Ca Mau, Lo Than RF outpost received an attack-by-fire of an unknown number and type of rounds followed by a ground attack.

D. Combat Activity Instigated By Communist Forces
In Laos during the Period from 9 through 15 March

12. Fighting in Laos continued to diminish and there were no serious Communist violations of the 22 February ceasefire during the reporting period. Light Communist ground probes and shelling attacks did occur in a number of locations, but no significant territory changed hands. Most of these Communist-initiated violations took place southeast of the Plaine des Jarres where North Vietnamese forces are attempting to reopen Route 4, to the southeast of Thakhek in the central Laos panhandle, and in Sithandone Province in the southern panhandle.

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ANNEX I



Paragraph 8 through 12: These paragraphs, which list reports of Communist-initiated fighting inside South Vietnam and Laos in violation of the ceasefire, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] In the case of South Vietnam, they are almost exclusively derived from reporting of the South Vietnamese armed forces, and may be subject to the biases inherent in RVNAF reporting at the present time. In the case of Laos, most of the reporting on combat violations comes from American observers, who are still on the scene. In any case, there is no particular security problem associated with using the information in these paragraphs in discussions with the North Vietnamese.

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ANNEX II

Post-Ceasefire Infiltration of North Vietnamese Personnel to the South

1. We received no evidence during the week of additional North Vietnamese personnel entering the infiltration pipeline in North Vietnam and starting the trip south. Present evidence indicates that about 10,000 personnel in both regular and special purpose groups started their trek south since 28 January. These plus other troops or specialists who had started previously make a total of over 20,000 personnel who are now in the pipeline. (Our estimated total of troops who are still in the pipeline is lower than it was last week, because a number have now reached their destination in South Vietnam or eastern Cambodia. Altogether, about 13,000 infiltrators have left the pipeline and arrived at their destinations since 28 January.)

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ANNEX IV

Definition of "major" and "minor" ceasefire violations:

Paragraph 8 of this memorandum contains a table listing the total number of Communist-inspired ceasefire violations reported by the GVN, both for the past week and for the whole period since the ceasefire became effective on 28 January. The determination of whether a violation is "major" or "minor" is based on the following criteria, which have been established by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Major Violation: One in which US/friendly forces, facilities or population centers:

- Receive numerous rounds of enemy mortar, artillery, or rocket fire within a short period of time or sporadically over a period of hours.
- Receive a multi-company (150-400 men) ground attack with or without supporting fire.
- Are subjected to one or more acts of terrorism involving extensive use of mines and demolitions.

Minor Violation: One in which US/friendly forces, facilities or population centers:

- Receive one or a very few rounds of enemy mortar, artillery, rocket, or small arms fire following an extended period during which no stand-off attacks-by-fire were received.
- Receive a small ground probe, unsupported by significant mortar, artillery, or rocket fire, following an extended period during which no attacks of this type were received.

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-Are subjected to one or a very few small terrorist attacks involving use of mines and demolitions following an extended period during which no attacks of this type were received.

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